

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Visitor Services Coordinator

Class Code: 90570

A. Purpose:

Directs the planning, development, and implementation of a visitor services program including but not limited to information and educational services, park promotions, special events, interpretive programs, and facilities; prepares and administers a budget, provides training for seasonal interpreters, evaluates visitor services, and provides technical assistance to park managers to ensure the goals and the objectives of the department are met.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Visitor Services Coordinators direct visitor services activities including development of program goals, implementing policies and procedures, and providing training in and expertise for visitor service projects.

Naturalists provide interpretive and recreational programming services to park visitors, park staff, and the public.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions that may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Administers a visitor services program to ensure interpretive programming is based on natural and cultural history and meets the needs of the public.
 - a. Plans, develops, and implements program goals and objectives by determining needs and priorities, and types and quantities of interpretive programs to be offered.
 - b. Prepares and administers an annual budget by evaluating requests from staff, analyzing effectiveness of previous expenditures, estimating project costs, developing an annual operating plan, monitoring and approving expenditures, and making necessary budget adjustments.
 - c. Develops and interprets policies and procedures for implementing visitor services; identifies inefficiencies in the program and implements corrective actions; and provides technical assistance to park management staff in developing visitor services programs at individual sites.
 - d. Evaluates effectiveness of visitor services by reviewing and analyzing field reports; contacting Naturalists for program evaluation; inspecting interpretive facilities; reviewing visitor services programs on-site, and analyzing user surveys and public input.
2. Oversees development and publishes educational and promotional brochures, articles, and pamphlets by researching topics, assigning topics to Naturalists, drafting and editing text, selecting layouts and designs, and preparing printing requisitions to ensure public awareness and appreciation of park resources and services.
3. Implements visitor services interpretive programs by hiring and training Naturalists, assigning work, developing program schedules, and monitoring presentations to ensure well-trained staff necessary to meet program goals and objectives.
 - a. Recruits and hires Naturalists and seasonal interpreters.
 - b. Develops training classes and materials that provide necessary information about the natural and cultural history of the park area.
 - c. Develops scripts and slide presentations to facilitate presentations.
 - d. Provides training workshops for Naturalists and seasonal employees.

- i. Identifies training needs.
- ii. Develops techniques to improve effectiveness.
- iii. Obtains technical assistance for staff on seasonal projects.
- e. Sets standards of performance for seasonal interpreters and evaluates performance.

4. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Reports to a Division Staff Specialist. Does not supervise.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to readjust program plans and schedules to compensate for time and budget constraints; solve technical problems that are holding up the completion of projects; and coordinate schedules with contractors. This is difficult because work must be accomplished around the convenience of the park users. Further challenged to design annual work plans that ensure program goals and objectives are met.

Problems include recruiting and retaining adequate staff to meet work schedule demands; providing enough information and training to new employees about the natural and cultural history of the area so they are comfortable presenting it as a program; finding time to conduct necessary research to develop informational brochures that relate to the park area flora, fauna, and history; and monitoring program schedules at multiple sites in a large park area.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include determining visitor services program needs and priorities; expenditure of budgeted funds; determining program goals and objectives; selecting a seasonal work force and determining work schedules and performance standards for subordinates; types and quantity of interpretive programs to be offered to the public; interpreting established policies and procedures; selecting designs and layouts for brochures, pamphlets and tabloids and their method of distribution; setting priorities for assigning time and resources to special projects; timeliness and quantity of media contacts; work schedules, training, travel and performance standards of subordinates; content of consultant contracts; and selecting alternative designs for projects.

Decisions referred include approval of projects; selection of final project design; final approval of consultant contracts; policy statements; final approval of the design and layout of brochures, pamphlets and tabloids; the establishment of special projects and deadlines; the park's role in community activities and special events; final approval of budget requests; and final approval of annual work plans.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with classroom educators to provide them with information about available programs, with staff members to coordinate work, and with managers regarding scheduling and project development; weekly contact with the public to provide information about available programs, with peers in other states to exchange and share ideas, with program facilitators to organize workshops and answer questions, with division personnel to assist in presenting school programs or developing presentations, with other natural resources agencies in the state to share ideas and projects; and with peers in other divisions to plan and carry out joint projects and share information on educational initiatives; monthly contact with special interest groups to respond to requests for programs or information; with consultants to discuss proposals,

specifications, and progress on contracts; with department engineers regarding the status of capital development projects; and with the Department of Tourism to discuss promotional activities; and quarterly contact with park lodge operators to discuss staff training and park promotions.

H. Working Conditions:

Typical office environment.

I. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- principles and practices of interpretive programming;
- curriculum development and classroom teaching as they relate to natural resources presentations;
- project development as it relates to natural history exhibits and displays;
- volunteerism;
- general natural and cultural history of the area and the state;
- public administration as it relates to fiscal planning and allocation; and recruiting seasonal, volunteer, and permanent employees;
- principles of effective human relations and dealing with the public.

Ability to:

- communicate information clearly and concisely;
- effectively use all types of media;
- assign, direct, and monitor the work of permanent, seasonal, and volunteer employees;
- develop and coordinate educational programs statewide for a variety of ages and levels of understanding;
- develop innovative resource materials;
- develop and coordinate special events in a public recreation setting;
- establish effective working relationships with coworkers, consultants, and other agencies' personnel.